

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) In an electronic commerce exchange server, an auction method for implementing automatic extension of an auction in response to bidding activity from auction participants, comprising:

a) ~~setting with the exchange server~~ an end time for concluding an auction, ~~and a~~ minimum bid threshold for postponing the end time for concluding the auction, ~~and a number of extensions allowed~~, the minimum bid threshold representing a total number of a plurality of bids that must be received within a predetermined time of the auction end time;

b) ~~receiving bids from remote bidders at the exchange server~~ via a distributed computing network;

e) ~~dynamically updating the minimum bid threshold with the exchange server as the auction is conducted and based on the a number of~~ bids received from the remote bidders;

d) ~~measuring with the exchange server~~ a number of bids received within the predetermined time of the auction end time;

e) ~~if in response to the measured number of bids exceeds~~ exceeding the minimum bid threshold and a number of extensions not exceeding the maximum number of extensions allowed, extending ~~the a~~ duration of the auction automatically with the exchange server and setting a new auction end time with the exchange server; and

f) ~~notifying auction participants of the new auction end time with the exchange server.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~wherein step a)~~ further ~~includes the step of~~ comprising setting with the exchange server a start time of the auction.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the minimum bid threshold ~~number of bids from step e)~~ is user defined.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined time ~~from step c)~~ is user defined.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~the~~ a duration of the extension from the new auction end time ~~from step d)~~ is user defined.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further ~~including the step of~~ comprising extending with the exchange server the duration of the auction ~~as in step d)~~ a plurality of times where the greater number of bids are received within the predetermined time respectively.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further ~~including the step of~~ comprising setting with the exchange server a minimum bid difference at which a succeeding bid must differ from a preceding bid from the remote bidders.

8. (Currently Amended) In an electronic commerce exchange server, an auction method for implementing dynamic automatic extension of an auction in response to bidding activity from auction participants, said method comprising:

~~a)~~ setting with the exchange server a start time and an end time for an auction, ~~and~~ a minimum bid threshold for postponing the end time for concluding the auction, and a number of extensions allowed, the minimum bid threshold representing a total number of a plurality of bids that must be received within a predetermined time of the auction end time;

~~b)~~ receiving bids from remote bidders at the exchange server via a distributed computing network;

~~c)~~ dynamically updating the minimum bid threshold with the exchange server as the auction is conducted and based on ~~the~~ a number of bids received from the remote bidders;

~~d)~~ setting with the exchange server a minimum bid difference at which a succeeding bid must differ from a preceding bid from the remote bidders;

~~e)~~ measuring with the exchange server a number of bids received within a predetermined time of the auction end time;

~~f) if in response to~~ the measured number of bids ~~exceeds~~ exceeding the minimum bid threshold and a number of extensions not exceeding the maximum number of extensions allowed, extending ~~the a~~ duration of the auction automatically with the exchange server and setting a new auction end time with the exchange server; and

~~g) notifying auction participants of the new auction end time~~ with the exchange server.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the minimum bid threshold ~~number of bids from step d)~~ is altered dynamically after the start time of the auction.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the predetermined time ~~from step d)~~ is altered dynamically after the start time of the auction.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein ~~the a~~ duration of the extension from the new auction end time ~~from step e)~~ is altered dynamically after the start time of the auction.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 further ~~including the step of~~ comprising extending the duration of the auction ~~as in step e)~~ with the exchange server a plurality of times where the greater number of bids are received within the predetermined time respectively.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said minimum bid threshold ~~number of bids~~ is dynamically adjustable during said auction.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 8, wherein said minimum bid threshold ~~number of bids~~ is dynamically adjustable during said auction.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically extending an auction, said method comprising:

setting with an exchange server an end time for concluding an auction, ~~and a~~ minimum bid threshold for postponing the end time for concluding the auction, and a number of

extensions allowed, the minimum bid threshold representing a total number of a plurality of bids that must be received within a predetermined time of the auction end time;

receiving bids from remote bidders at the exchange server via a distributed computing network;

dynamically updating the minimum bid threshold with the exchange server as the auction is conducted and based on ~~the~~ a number of bids received from the remote bidders;

measuring with the exchange server a rate at which incoming bids are received;

~~if in response to~~ the measured rate of incoming bids ~~exceeds~~ exceeding the minimum bid threshold and a number of extensions not exceeding the maximum number of extensions allowed, automatically extending the duration of the auction with the exchange server and setting a new auction end time with the exchange server; and

notifying auction participants of the new auction end time with the exchange server.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 15 further comprising:  
measuring with the exchange server said rate at which incoming bids are received during a predetermined time before the end of said auction.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 15, wherein said minimum bid threshold is dynamically adjustable during said auction.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 15, wherein said minimum bid threshold is set prior to the start of said auction.